A CONFESSION OF FAITH,

Of the severall *Congregations* or Churches of Christ in *LONDON*, which are commonly (though unjustly) called ANABAPTISTS.

Published for the vindication of the Truth, and Information of the ignorant; likewise for the taing off of those aspersions which are frequently, both in Pulpit and Print, unjustly cast upon them.

Unto which is added

HEART-BLEEDINGS For Professors abominations:

Or a faithful general Epistle (from the same Churches) presented to all who have known the way of truth, forewarning them to flee Security, and careless walking under the profession of the same; discovering some of Satans wiles, whereby also wanton persons and their ungodly waies are disclaimed.

But this I confess unto thee, that after the way they call heresie, so worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things that are written in the Law and the Prophets, and have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, Acts 24. 14,15.

For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen, and heard, Acts 4.20.

The fifth Impression Corrected.

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The Epiſtle to the Reader.

Courteous Reader,

THere is nothing wherein Saints ſhould be more converſant than in promoting the honour of the Lord and his Chriſt, ſtriving and ſtudying to walk before him agreeable to the truth recorded in his word; the conſideration of which, is a ſtrong inducement unto us to ingage (to the utmoſt of our abilities) in this work, that when other men content themſelves by living below the rule, we may ſtrive to walk cloſe thereunto, (ſuitable to the pattern left us by God in his word) and when many account it their glory to turn their backs upon what they profeſſed to have received from Chriſt, we may ſtrive to honour God, by a ſteadfaſt continuance in what we have received, and in a diligent ſpeaking the things which we have ſeen and heard from him; the weight of which at firſt prevailed upon us to declare unto the world this our Confeſſion of Faith, and faithful Epiſtle, which we have again reprinted, and made publique for the reaſons following.

Firſt, the invitations & earneſt ſolicitations of ſeveral of our Brethren, from all parts of the Nation, whoſe hearts long to behold (in publique) our ſtability and perſeverance in the way and truth of our God, that by it they may have wherewith to put to ſilence thoſe who have lately taken liberty to reproch and undervalue the truth profeſſed by us.

Secondly, that the world may behold that through grace (by which alone we ſtand) we are preſerved from back-ſliding or revolting from the way and truth we for ſome years have followed God in: In which (through the faith and obedience) we truſt to be continued, unto the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

Thirdly, that we might prevent Satan and his accomplices in their enterprizes, who have of late abounded more than ordinary, with ſtratagems and inventions to circumvent poor Saints, in their ſtability and love unto the truth, amongſt which this was no ſmall one (in ſeveral remote parts) that we had caſt off all our former profeſſion and practice, ſo that none remained together, worſhipping God in his way, owning themſelves the Church of Chriſt, but were grown up to a further attainment and light (as they ſay) to live more immediately with God and Chriſt, than in ſo low, mean, and contemptible a way as Ordinances, thinking thereby to ſtumble and diſhearten many, whoſe hearts were approved to God.

Fourthly, That we might take off prejudice from the hearts of thoſe (ma-

ny of which we have comfortable hopes) who are or may be prejudiced against us, from these many invectives, and bitter unjust reproaches, we are or may be (for worshipping our God according to our consciences and rule of truth) exposed unto, and they (if it be the good pleasure of our God) come to understand our practice, and subject themselves to the Lord in his commands.

Lastly, The remembrance of what good this our undertaking hath formerly done in the Countries, where it hath been spread (of which we have had particular notice from several, whose hearts have been refreshed therewith) is no small inducement to us to bring this forth again in print.

Courteous Friend, we desire thee soberly to weigh and consider what we have professed before men and Angels, out of the simplicity of our hearts, and let not prejudice prevent thy profiting, but make it thy great care and study to give up thy understanding to love and receive the truth, as it is in Iesus, delighting thy self in that Government, which is by his own hand established in his house. Be not disheartned although thou shouldst hear of the miscarriage of some, knowing that in many things we sinne all, and come short of the grace of our God; or if thou shouldst be advertised of the falling away of any one, do but consider we live in the last ages of the world, Wherein many shall depart from the truth, (*neither is it a new thing for men to relinquish their profession.*)

But strive thou to follow God fully, and to stand fast in the simplicity of the truth; and God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ be with thee, and be thy guide and Counsellour.

Signed in the name, and by the appointment of the aforesaid several Churches meeting in *London*.

William Kiffen,
John Spilsbery,
Joseph Sanson,
Hugh Gosnell,
Thomas Pault,
Joseph Patshall,
William Conset,
Edward Harrison,
Richard Graves,
Edward Roberts,
Thomas Waters,
Henry Forty,
Thomas Young,
John Watson.

A Confeſſion of Faith of the ſeveral Congregations or Churches of Chriſt in *London*, which are commonly (though unjuſtly) called *Anabaptiſts*.

1. THe Lord our God is but [a] one God, whoſe [b] ſubſiſtence is in himſelf; whoſe eſſence cannot be comprehended by any but himſelf; who only hath immortality, [c] dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto; who is in himſelf moſt [d] holy, every way [e] infinite, in [f] greatneſs, in [g] wiſdome, [h] power, love, [i] mercifull and gracious, long ſuffering and abundant in goodneſs and truth, who giveth [k] being, moving and preſervation, to all creatures. [a] 1 *Cor.* 8. 6. *Iſ.* 44. 6. *Chap.* 46. 9. [b] *Exod.* 3. 14. [c] 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. [d] *Iſa.* 43. 15. [e] *Pſ.* 147. 5. [f] *Deut.* 32. 3. [g] *Job* 36. 5. [h] *Jer.* 10. 12. [i] *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. [k] *Act.* 17. 18. *Rom.* 11. 39.

2. In this divine and infinite being, there is the [l] Father, the [m] Word, and the [n] holy Spirit, each having the whole divine [o] eſſence, yet the eſſence undivided; all infinite without any beginning, therefore but [p] one God, who is not to be divided in nature, and being, but diſtinguiſhed by ſeveral peculiar relative properties. [l] 1 *Cor.* 1. 3. [m] *John* 1. 1. [n] *Chap.* 15. 26. [o] *Ex.* 3. 14. [p] 1 *Cor.* 8. 6.

3. God hath [q] decreed in himſelf, before the world was, concerning all things, [r] to work, diſpoſe and bring them about, (according to the Counſell of his own will) to his glory: yet without being the Author of ſin, or having fellowſhip with any therin) in which appears his wiſdom in diſpoſing all things, unchangeableneſs, power and faithfulneſs in accompliſhing his decree: and God had before the foundation of the World, fore-ordained ſome men to eternal life, through Ieſus Chriſt, to the praiſe and glory of his grace; leaving the reſt to act in their ſin, to their juſt condemnation, and to the praiſe of his juſtice. [q] *Iſ.* 46. 10. *Eph.* 1. 11. *Rom.* 11. 33. [r] *Pſ.* 115. 3. & 135. 6. *Pſ.* 33. 15. 1 *Sam.* 10. 9. 26. *Pro.* 21. 6. *Ex.* 21. 13. *Pro.* 16. 33. *Pſ.* 144. *Iſ.* 45. 7. *Ier.* 14. 22. *Mat.* 6. 28, 30. *Col.* 1. 16, 17. *Num.* 23. 19, 20. *Rom.* 3. 4. *Ier.* 10. 10. *Ep.* 1. 4, 5. *Iud.* 4, 6. *Prov.* 10. 4.

4. In the [a] beginning God made all things very good; created man after his own [b] image, filled with all meet perfection of nature, and free from all ſin; but [c] long he abode not in this honor, Satan uſing the ſubtilty of the [d] Serpent, to ſeduce firſt *Eve*, then by her ſeducing *Adam*; who without any compulſion, in eating the forbidden fruit, [e] tranſgreſſed the command of God, and fell, whereby [f] death came upon all his poſterity, who now are conceived

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in sin, and by nature the Children of wrath, the servants of sin, the subjects of [g] death, and other miseries in the world, and for ever, unless the Lord Jesus Christ set them free. [a] *Gen.* 1.1. *Col.*1.16. *Isa.*45.12. [b] 1 *Cor.*15.45,46. *Eccl.* 7.29. [d] *Gen.*3. 1.4,5. 2 *Cor.*11.3. [e] 1 *Tim.*2.14. [f] *Gal.*3.22. [g] *Rom.*5.12.18, 19. *Chap.*6.21. *Eph.*2. 3.

5. God in his infinite [a] power and wisdome, doth [b] dispose all things to the end for which they were created, that neither any thing befalls any by chance, or without his [c] providence; and whatsoever befalls the Elect, is by his appointment, for his glory, and their [d] good. a *Job* 38.11. b *Is.*46. 10,11. *Eccle.* 3.14. c *Mat.* 10.29,30 *Ex.* 21.13. *Pro.*16.33. d *Rom.*8.28.

6. All the Elect being [e] loved of God, with an everlasting love, are [f] redeemed, quickened, and saved, not by themselves, nor by their own works, lest any man should boast, but onely and wholly by God of his free [g] grace and mercy through Jesus Christ, who is made unto us by God, [h] wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and all in all, that he that rejoiceth might rejoice in the *Lord.* [e] *Jer.*31.2. [f] *Eph.*1.3. 7. *Chap.*2.8,9. 1 *Thes.*5.9. [g] *Act.* 13. 38. 1 *Cor.* 5.21. *Jer.*9.23, 24. [h] 1 *Cor.*1.30,31. *Jer.* 23. 6.

7. And [i] this is life eternal, that we might know him the onely true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. And on [k] the contrary, the Lord will render vengeance in flaming fire, to them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ. [i] *Joh.*17.3. *Heb.* 5. 9. [k] 1 *Thes.*1.8. *Joh.* 6. 36.

8. The rule of this knowledge, faith and obedience, concerning the worship of God, in which is contained the whole duty of man, is (not [l] mens laws or traditions, but) only the Word of God, contained in the Holy [m] Scriptures, in which is plainly recorded whatsoever is needful for us to know, believe, and practise, which is the only rule of holiness and obedience for all Saints, at all times, in all places to be observed. [l] *Col.* 2.23. *Mat.*15.9. 6. [m] *John* 5. 39. 2 *Tim.*3.15,16,17. *Is.*8. 20. *Gal.* 1. 8,9. *Act.*3.22,23.

9. The Lord Jesus Christ, (of whom [n] *Moses* and the Prophets wrote, the Apostles preached) he is the [o] Son of God, the brightness of his glory &c. by whom he made the world, who upholdeth and governeth all things that he hath made; who also when the [p] fulness of time was come, was made of a woman, of the Tribe of *Judah*, of the seed of *Abraham* and *David*; to wit, of the Virgin *Mary*, the holy Spirit coming down upon her, the power of the most high overshadowing her: and he was also tempted as we are, yet without sin. [n] *Gen.*3.15. *Chap.*22.18. & 49.10. *Dan.*7.13. & 9.24,25,26. [o] *Prov.* 8. 23. *Joh.*1.1,2,3. *Heb.*1, 8. [p] *Gal.* 4. 4. *Heb.* 7. 14. *Rev.*5. 5. *with Gen.* 49. 9, 10. *Rom.* 1. 3. *and* 9, 10. *Mat.*1. 16. *with Luke* 3. 23, 26. *Heb.* 2. 16. *Is.* 52.3:4, 5. *Heb.* 15.

10, [q] Jesus Christ is made the Mediator of the new and everlasting Covenant of

of Grace between God and man, ever to be [r] perfectly and fully the Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church of God for evermore. [q] 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. *Heb.* 9. 15. *John* 14. 6. [r] *Isa.* 9. 6, 7.

11. Unto this Office he was appointed by [a] God from everlasting, and in respect of his man-hood, from the womb called, separated, and [b] anointed most fully and abundantly with all gifts necessary, God having without measure powred out his Spirit upon him. [a] *Prov.* 8. 23. *Isa.* 42. 6. & 49. 15. [b] *Isa.* 11. 2, 3, 4, 5. & 61. 1, 2. with *Luke* 4. 17, 22. *John* 1. 14. 16. & 3. 34.

12. Concerning his Mediatorship, the Scripture holds forth Christ's call to his Office: For [a] none takes this honour upon him, but he that is called of God, as was *Aaron*, it being an action of God, whereby a speciall promise being made, he ordains his Son to this Office, which promise is, that Christ should be made a sacrifice for sin, that he should see his [b] seed, and prolong his dayes, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand: [c] all of meer free and absolute grace towards Gods elect, and without any condition foreseen in them to procure it. [a] *Heb.* 5. 4, 5, 6. [b] *Isa.* 53. 10, 11. [c] *Joh.* 3. 16. *Rom.* 8. 32.

13. This Office to be a Mediator, that is, to be Prophet, Priest and King of the Church of God, is so proper to Christ, that neither in whole, or any part thereof, it cannot be transferred from him to any other. 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. *Heb.* 7. 24. *Dan.* 7. 14. *Act.* 4. 12. *Luk.* 1. 33. *John* 14. 6.

14. This office to which Christ is called, is threefold, as [a] a Prophet, [b] Priest, and [c] King; this number and order of office is necessary; for in respect of our [d] ignorance, we stand in need of his Prophetical office; and in respect of our great [e] alienation from God, we need his Priestly office to reconcile us; and in respect of our averseness and utter inability to return to God, we need his Kingly office to [f] convince, [g] subdue, [h] draw, [i] uphold and [k] preserve us to his heavenly Kingdome. [a] *Deut.* 8. 15. with *Acts* 3. 22, 23. [b] *Heb.* 3. 1. & 4. 14, 15. [c] *Psa.* 2. 6. [d] 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. *Acts* 26. 18. [e] *Col.* 1. 21. [f] *John.* 16. 8. [g] *Psa.* 110. 3. [h] *Cant.* 1. 3. *John* 6. 44. [i] *Phil.* 4. 13. [k] 2 *Tim.* 4. 18.

15. Concerning the Propheſie of Christ, it is that whereby he hath [a] revealed the will of God whatsoever is needfull for his Servants to know and [b] obey; and therefore he is called not onely a Prophet and Doctor, and the [c] Apostle of our profession, and the [d] Angel of the Covenant, [e] but also the very wisdom of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdome and knowledge, who for ever continueth revealing the same truth of the Gospel to his People. [a] *Ioh.* 1. 18. & 12. 49, 50. & 15 & 17. 8. *Deut.* 18. 15. [b] *Mat.* 23. 10. [c] *Heb.* 3. 1. [d] *Mal.* 3. 1. [e] 1 *Cor.* 1. 24. *Col.* 2. 3.

16. That he might be a Prophet every way compleat, it was necessary he should be God, and also that he should be man: for unless he had been God, he

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could never have perfectly understood the will of God; and unless he had been man, he could not suitably have unfolded it in his own person to men.

John 1. 18. Acts 3. 22. with Deut. 18. 15. Heb. 1. 1. That Jesus Christ is God, is wonderfull clearly expressed in the Scriptures: he is called, The mighty God, Isa. 9. 6. That word was God, John 1. 1. Christ who is God over all, Rom. 9. 5. God manifested in the flesh, 1 Tim. 3. 16. The same is very God, 1 John 5. 20. He is the first, Rev 1. 8 he gives being to all things, and without him was nothing made, John 1. 2. He forgiveth sins, Mat. 9. 6 He is before *Abraham*, John 8. 48. He was, and is, and ever will be the same, Heb. 13 8. He is alwayes with his to the end of the world, Mat. 28. 20. which could not be said of Jesus Christ if he were not God. And to the Son he saith, Thy Throne, O God is for ever and ever, Heb. 1. 8. John i. 18. Act. 20. 28. Also, Christ is not only perfectly God, but perfect Man, made of a woman, Gal 4. 4 made of the seed of *David*, Rom. 1. 3. Coming out of the loins of *David*, Act. 2. 30. of *Jesse* and *Judah*, Acts 13. 23 In that the Children were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part with them, Heb. 2. 14. he took not on him the nature of Angels, but the seed of *Abraham*, verse 16. So that we are bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, Eph 5. 30. So that he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, Heb. 2. 11. See Acts 3. 22. Deut. 18. 15. Heb. 1. 1.

17. Concerning his [a] Priesthood, Christ having sanctified himself, hath appeared once to put away sin, by that one offering of himself a sacrifice for sin, by which he hath fully finished and suffered all things God required for the salvation of his Elect, and removing all Rites and Shadows, &c. And is now entered within the veil, into the Holy of Holies, which is the presence of God. Also, he makes his people a spiritual house, an holy Priest-hood to offer up Spiritual sacrifice acceptible to God through him. Neither doth the Father accept, or Christ offer to the Father any other worship or worshippers: [a] *Joh.* 17. 19. *Heb.* 3. 7, 8, 9, & 10. 11. *Rom.* 5. 19 *Eph.* 5. 2. *Col.* 1. 20. *Eph.* 2. 14, 15, 16. *Rom.* 8. 34. *Heb.* 9. 24. & 8. 1. 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *John* 4. 23, 24.

18. This Priest-hood was not legal to temporary, but according to the Order of [a] *Melchisedec*, and is stable and perfect, not for a [b] time, but for ever, which is suitable to Iesus Christ, as to him that ever liveth: Christ was the Priest, Sacrifice, and Altar: he was a Priest, according to both natures; he was a sacrifice according to his humane nature; whence in [c] Scripture it is attributed to his body, to his [d] blood: yet the effectualness of this Sacrifice did depend upon his divine nature, therefore it is called the blood of God. He was the Altar according to his [e] divine nature, it belonging to the [f] Altar to sanctifie that which is offered upon it, & so it ought to be of greater dignity than the sacrifice it self. [a] *Heb.* 7. 17. [b] *Heb.* 7. 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, [c] *Heb.* 5. 6. [d] *Heb.* 10. 10. 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. *Col.* 1. 20, 22. [e] *Heb.* 9, 13. *Acts* 20, 28. [f] *Heb.* 9. 14. & 13. 10, 12, 15. *John* 17. 19.

16. Concerning his Kingly Office, [g] Christ being risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and having all power in heaven and earth, he doth spiritually govern his Church, and doth exercise his power over all Angels and men,

men, good and bad, to the preservation and salvation of the Elect, and to the over-ruling and destruction of his enemies. By his Kingly power, he appli-eth the benefits, virtue, and fruits of his Prophecie and Priest-hood to his Elect, subduing their sins, preserving and strengthning them in all their conflicts a-gainst Satan, the World, and the flesh; keeping their hearts in faith, and filial fear by his Spirit: by this his mighty power he ruleth the vessels of wrath, u-sing, limitting and restraining them as it seems good to his infinite wisdome. 1 *Cor.* 15. 4. 1 *Pet.* 3. 21, 22. *Mat.* 28. 18, 19, 20. *Luke* 24. 51. *Act.* 3. 1. & 5. 30, 31. *John* 19. 36. *Rom.* 14. 9. *John* 5. 26, 27. *Rom.* 5. 6, 7, 8. & 14. 17. *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. *Mark* 1. 27. *Heb.* 1. 14. *John* 16. 15. *Job* 1. 8. *Rom.* 1. 21, 17, 18.

20. This his Kingly power shall be more fully manifested, when he shall come in glory to reign among his Saints, when he shall put down all rule and authority under his feet, that the glory of the Father may be perfectly manifest-ed in his Sonne, and the glory of the Father and the Son in all his Members. *Eph.* 4. 17, 18. 2 *Pet.* 2. 1 *Cor.* 15. 24, 28. *Heb.* 9. 28. 2 *Thess.* 1. 9, 10. 1 *Thess.* 4. 15, 16, 17. *Iohn* 17. 21, 26.

21. Jesus Christ by his death did purchase salvation for the Elect that God gave unto him: These have interest in him, and being called, have fellowship with him, for whom he makes intercession to his Father in their behalf, and to them doth God by his Spirit apply this Redemption, as also the free gift of e-ternal life and glory is given to them and none else. *Eph.* 1. 14. *Heb.* 5. 9. *Mat.* 1. 21: *John* 17. 6. *Heb.* 7. 25. 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. *Rom.* 8. 29, 30. 1 *John* 5. 12. *John* 15. 13. *John* 3. 16.

22. Faith is the [a] gift of God, wrought in the hearts of the Elect, by the Spirit of God; by which they come to know and believe the truth of the [b] Scri-ptures, and the excellency of them above all other writings, and all things in the world, as they hold forth the glory of God in his attributes, the excellency of Christ in his nature and offices, and of the power and fulness of the Spirit in its workings and operations, and so are inabled to cast their souls upon this truth thus believed. *a Eph.* 2. 8. *John* 6. 29. & 4. 10. *Phil.* 1. 29. *Gal.* 5. 22. *b John* 17. 17. *Heb.* 4. 11, 12. *Iohn* 6. 62.

23. All those that have this precious [faith] wrought in them by the Spirit, can never finally or totally fall away, seeing the gifts of God are without re-pentance, so that he still begets and nourisheth in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality; and though ma-ny storms and floods arise, and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock, which by faith they are fastned up-on; notwithstanding, through unbelief and the temptations of Satan, the sen-sible sight of this light and love be clouded and overwhelmed for a time; yet God is still the same, and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of God un-

to salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraven upon the palms of his hands, and their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity. *Mat.* 7.24, 29. *John* 13. 10. *John* 10. 28, 29. 1 *Pet.* 1. 4, 5, 6. *Isa.* 49. 13, 14, 15, 16.

24. Faith is ordinarily (*a*) begotten by the preaching of the Gospel, or word of Christ, without respect to (*b*) any power or agency in the creature; but it being wholy (*c*) passive, and dead in trespasses and sins, doth believe, and is converted by no less (*d*) power than that which raised Christ from the dead. *a Rom.* 10.17. 1 *Cor.* 1.28. *b Rom.* 9.19. *c Ezek.* 16.16. *Rom.* 3. 12. *d Rom.* 1. 16. *Ephes.* 1.19. *Col.* 2.12.

25. The preaching of the Gospel to the conversion of sinners, is [*a*] absolutely free; no way requiring as absolutely necessary, any qualifications, preparations, or terrors of the Law, or preceding Ministry of the Law; but onely and alone the naked soul, [*b*] a sinner, and ungodly, to receive Christ crucified, dead and buried, and risen again, who is made a Prince and a Saviour for such sinners as through the Gospell shall be brought to believe on him. *a John* 3. 14, 15. *&* 1. 12. *Isa.* 55. 1. *John* 7. 37. *b* 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *Rom.* 4. 5. *&* 5. 8. *Acts* 5. 30, 31. *&* 2. 36. 1 *Cor.* 1. 22. 24.

26. The same power that converts to faith in Christ, carrieth on the [*a*] soul through all duties, temptations, conflicts, sufferings; and whatsoever a believer is, he is by [*b*] grace, and is carried on in all obedience, and temptations, by the same. *a* 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *b* 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *c Phil.* 2. 12, 13. *John* 15. 5. *Gal* 2. 19, 20.

27. All believers are by Christ united to God; by which union, God is one with them, and they are one with him; and that all believers are the [*a*] Sons of God, and joint heirs with Christ, to whom belong all the promises of this life, and that which is to come. *a* 1 *Thes.* 1. 1. *John* 17. 21. *&* 20. 17. *Heb.* 2. 11, 12, 16. *b Gal.* 2. 19, 20.

28. Those that have union with Christ, are justified from [*a*] all their sinnes by the bloud of Christ; which Justification is a gracious and full acquitance of a guilty sinner from all sin by God, through the satisfaction that Christ hath made by his death for all their sins, & this is to be applied by the Spirit through believing. *a* 1 *John* 1. 7. *Heb.* 10. 14. *&* 9. 26. 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. *Rom.* 3. 23, *Act.* 13. 38, 39. *Rom.* 5. 1. *&* 3. 29, 30.

29. All believers are a holy and [*a*] sanctified people, and that sanctification is a special fruit of the [*b*] new covenant, and an effect of the [*c*] love of God manifested in the soul, whereby the believer presseth after a heavenly and Evangelical obedience to all the commands, which Christ as Head and King in the new Covenant hath prescribed to them. *a* 1 *Cor.* 1. 1. 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *b Ephes.* 1. 4. *c* 1 *John* 4. 16. *Mat.* 28. 20.

30. *All*

30. All believers through the knowledge of [a] that justification of life given by the Father, and brought forth by the blood of Christ, have as their great privilege of that new [b] Covenant peace with God, and reconciliation, whereby they that were afar off, are made nigh, by [c] that blood, and have [d] peace passing all understanding; yea, joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by [e] whom we have received the attonement. [a] 2 *Cor.* 5.19. *Rom.* 5.9,10. [b] *Isa.* 44.10. & 26.12. [c] *Eph.* 2.13,14. [d] *Eph.* 4.7. *Rom.* 5.10, 11.

31. All believers in the time of this life, are in a continual [a] warfare and combate against sin, self, the world and the Devil; and are liable to all manner of afflictions, [b] tribulations and persecutions, being [c] predestinated and appointed thereunto, and whatsoever the Saints possess or enjoy of God spiritually, is by faith; and outward and temporal things are lawfully enjoyed by a civil right, by them who have [d] no faith. [a] *Rom.* 7. 23,24. *Eph.* 6.10, 11, 12,13. [b] *Heb.* 2.9,10. 2 *Tim.* 3.12. [c] *Rom.* 8.29. 1 *Thess.* 3.3. *Gal.* 2.19, 20. 2 *Cor.* 5.7. [d] *Deut.* 2.5.

32. The only strength the Saints are enabled with to encounter all oppositions and [a] tryals, is [b] only by Jesus Christ, who is the Captain of their Salvation, being made perfect through [c] sufferings, who hath engaged his faithfulness and strength to assist them in all their afflictions, and to uphold them in all their temptations, and to preserve them by his power to his everlasting Kingdom and glory. [a] *John* 16.33. [b] *John* 15. 5. *Phil.* 4.11. [c] *Heb.* 2.9,10. 2 *Tim.* 4.18.

33. Jesus Christ hath here on earth a spiritual Kingdome, which is his Church, whom he hath purchased and redeemed to himself as a peculiar inheritance; which Church is a company of visible Saints, [b] called and separated from the World, by the Word and [c] Spirit of God, to the visible profession of the faith of the Gospel, [d] being baptized into that faith, and joined to the Lord, and each to other, by mutual consent in the [e] practical enjoyment of the ordinances, commanded by Christ their Head and King. [a] *Mat.* 11.11. 2 *Thes.* 1.15. & 1 *Cor.* 1.2. *Ephes.* 1.1. [b] *Rom.* 1.7. *Act.* 19. 8,9. & 26. 18. 2 *Cor.* 6.17. *Rev.* 18.4. [c] *Act.* 2.37. *with* 10.37. [d] *Rom.* 10.10. *Mat.* 18.19,20. *Act.* 2.42. [e] *Act.* 9.26. 1 *Pet.* 2.5.

34. To this Church he [a] hath made his promises, and given the signs of his Covenant, [b] presence, acceptation, love, [c] blessing, and [d] protection. Here are the fountains and springs of his heavenly graces [e] flowing forth, to refresh and strengthen them. [a] *Mat.* 28.18,19, 20. [b] 1 *Cor.* 11.24. & 3.21. 2 *Cor.* 6.18. *Rom.* 9.4 5. *Psa.* 133.3. [d] *Rom.* 3.7,10. [e] *Ezek.* 47.2.

35. And all his Servants, of all estates (are to acknowledge him [a] to be their Prophet, Priest, and King;) and called thither to be enrolled among his houshold servants, to present their bodies and souls, and to bring their

gifts God hath given them, to be under his heavenly conduct and government, to lead their lives in this walled Sheepfold, and watered *b* Garden, to have communion here with his Saints, that they may be assured that they are made meet to be partakers of their *c* inheritance in the Kingdom of God; & to supply each others wants, inward and outward; and (although each person hath a *d* propriety in his own estate, yet they are to supply each others wants, according as their *e* necessity shall require, that the name of Jesus *f* Christ may not be blasphemed through the necessity of any in the Church) also being come, they are here by himself to be bestowed in their several order, due place, peculiar use, being fitly compact and knit together *g* according to the effectuall working of every part, to the edifying of it self in love. a *Acts* 2.41,47. *Isa.*4.3. 1 *Cor.* 12. 6,7. 12. 18. *Ez.* 20.40.37. b *Cant.* 4. 12. *Eph.* 2.19. *Rom.* 12. 4,5,6. *Col.* 1. 12. & 2. 5. 6.29. c *Acts* 20. 32. d *Acts* 5. 4 e *Acts* 2.44,45. & 4.34,35. f *Luke* 14. 26. 1 *Tim.* 6. 1. g *Eph.* 4. 16.

36. Being thus joined, every Church *a* hath power given them from Christ, for their wel-being, to chuse amongst themselves meet persons for *b* Elders and Deacons, being qualified according to the Word, *c* as those which Christ hath appointed in his Testament, for the feeding, governing, serving, and building up of his Church, and that none have any power to *d* impose on them either these or any other. a *Act.* 1. 23, 26. & 6.3. *with* 15. 22, 25. b *Rom.* 12. 7,8. c 1 *Tim.* 3. 2.6,7,8. 1 *Cor.* 12. 8. 28. *Heb.* 13, 7. 17. 1 *Pet.* 5. 1,2,3. d 1 *Pet.* 4. 15.

37. That the Ministers lawfully called as aforesaid, ought to continue in their calling and place, according to Gods ordinance, and carefully to feed the flock of God committed to them, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. *Heb.* 5. 4. *Iohn* 10.3,4. *Acts* 20.28,29. *Rom.* 12.7,8. *Heb.* 13.7, 17. 1 *Pet.* 5.1,2,4.

38. Baptism is an Ordinance of the *a* New Testament, given by Christ, to be dispensed upon persons professing faith, or that are made disciples; who upon profession of faith, and desiring of it, ought to be baptized, and after to partake of the Lords Supper. a *Mat.* 28. 18, 19. *Iohn* 4. 1. *Mark* 16. 15,16. *Acts* 2. 37, 38. & 8. 36, 37, 38. & 18.

39. That the way and manner of the *a* dispensing this ordinance, is dipping or plunging the body under water; it being a sign, must answer the things signified, which is, that interest the Saints have in the *b* death, buriall, and resurrection of Christ c And that as certainly as the body is buried under water, and risen again, so certainly shall the bodies of the Saints be raised by the power of Christ, in the day of the resurrection, to reign with Christ. a *Mat.* 36.16. *Mar.* 15.9. *reads* [*into Iordan*] *in Greek Iohn* 3.23. *Acts* 8.38. b *Rev.* 1.5. & 7.14. *with Heb.* 10. 22. *Rom.* 6. 3, 4, 5, 6. 1 *Cor.* 15. 28, 29. The

word

word Baptiso *signifies to dip or plunge, yet so as convenient Garments be both upon the Administrator and Subject, with all modesty, which is also our practice, as many eye witnesses can testify.*

40. The person designed by Christ to dispense Baptism, the Scripture holds forth to be a disciple; it being no where tied to a particular Church-Officer, or person extraordinarily sent, the commission injoining the administration, being given to them as considered disciples, being men able to preach the Gospel. *Isa.*8.16. *Ephes.* 3.7. *Mat.* 28.19. *Iohn.*4.2. *Act.*20. 7. *chap.* 11. 20. 1 *Cor.* 11. 24. *with* 1 *Cor.*10.16,17. *Rom.*16.2.

41. Christ hath likewise given power to his Church to receive in, and cast out, any Member that deserves it; and this power is given to every congregation, and not to one particular person, either Member or Officer, but in relation to the whole body, in reference to their faith and fellowship. *Mat.* 18. 17. 1 *Cor.*5.4.13. *with* 12.6.2.3. 2 *Cor.* 2. 6,7.

42. And every particular Member of each Church, how excellent, great or learned soever, is subject to this censure and judgement; and that the Church ought not without great care and tenderness, and due advice, by the rule of faith and truth, to proceed against her Members. *Mat.*18.16,17,18. *Acts* 11. 2,3. 1 *Tim.* 5. 19,20,21. *Col.*4.17. *Acts* 15. 1,2,3.

43. Christ for the keeping of this Church in holy and orderly communion placeth some speciall men over the Church, who by their office are to govern, over-see, visit, watch, so likewise for the better keeping therof, in all places by the Members, he hath given authority, and laid duty upon all to watch over one another. *Act.*20 27,28. *Heb.*13.17, 24. *Mat.*24.45. 1 *Thes.*5.2. 14. *Iude* 3. 20. *Heb.*10.34,35. *&* 12. 15. 1 *Cor.*14.3. *&c.*

44. All such to whom God hath given gifts in the Church, may and ought to prophesie, according to the proportion of faith, and so to each publickly the word of God, for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the Church. *Rom.*12.6. 1 *Pet.*4.10,11. 1 *Cor.*12.7. 1 *Thes.*5.19,20,21.

45. Thus being rightly gathered, and continuing in the obedience of the Gospel of Christ, none are to separate for faults and corruptions (for as long as the Church consists of men subject to failings, there will be diffrence in the true constituted Church) until they have in due order, and tenderness, sought redress thereof. *Rev.*2. *&* 3. *ch. Act.*15.12. 1 *Cor.*1.10. *Iude* 19. *Rev.* 2. 20, 21,22: *Act.*15.1,2. *Rom.*14.1. *and* 15.1,2,3.

46. And although the particular Congregations be distinct and several [a] bodies, every one as a compact and knit [b] City within it self; yet are they all to walk by [c] one rule of truth; So also they (by all means convenient) are to have the counsel and help [d] one of another, if necessity require it, as members of one body, in the common faith, under Christ their Head. *a* 1 *Cor.*4.17. *and* 14.33.6. *and* 16.1. *b Ps.*122.3. *Ephes.*2,12,19. *with Rev.*21. *c.* 1. *Tim.*3.15. *d Act.*15.2,3. *Cant.*8. 1.4.13,14.

47. A

47. A civil (*a*) Magistracy is an Ordinance of God, set up by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; and that in all lawfull things, commanded by them, subjection ought to be given by us in the Lord, not onely for wrath, but for conscience sake; and that we are to make supplications, and prayers for Kings, and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlinesse and honesty. (*a*) *Rom.* 13. 1, 2, 3, 4. 1 *Pet.* 2. 13, 14. 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2, 3.

48. That we have great cause to bless God, and to be thankful for the peace and liberty we enjoy in the service of our God under the present government: but if the Magistrate should not favour us herein, (*a*) yet we dare not suspend our practice, because we believe we ought to go on in obedience to Christ, in professing the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints, which Faith is declared in the holy Scriptures, and this our Confession of Faith a part thereof, and that we are to witness to the truth of the Old and New Testament unto the death if necessity require, in the midst of all tryals and afflictions, as his Saints of old have done; not accounting our goods, lands, wives, children, fathers, mothers, brethren, sisters, yea, and our own lives dear unto us, so we may finish our course with joy, remembring alwaies that we ought to (*b*) obey God rather than men; who will when we have finished our course, and kept the faith, give us (*c*) the crown of righteousness; to (*d*) whom we must give an account of all our actions, no man being able to discharge us of the same (*a*) *Acts* 2. 40, 41. *and* 4. 19. *and* 5. 28, 29, 41. *and* 20. 23. 1 *The.* 3. 3. *Phil.* 1. 28, 29. *Dan.* 3. 16, 17. *and* 6. 7, 10, 22, 23. (*b*) 1 *Tim.* 6. 13, 14, 15. *Rom.* 12. 1, 8. 1 *Cor.* 14 37. (*c*) *Rev.* 2. 20. (*d*) 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, 7, 8. *Rom.* 14. 10, 12. 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *Psal.* 49 7. *Ps.* 50. 22. *Act.* 8. 38. *and* 10. 1, 2 35. 44. *Rom.* 16. 23. *Deut.* 6. 13. *Rom.* 1. 9.

49. It is lawfull for a Christian to be a Magistrate or civil Officer; and also it is lawful to take an oath, so it be in truth, and in judgement, and in righteousness, for confirmation of truth, and ending of all strife; and that by rash and vain oaths the Lord is provoked, and this land mourns. 2 *Cor.* 10. 11. *Ier.* 4. 2. *Heb.* 6. 16. 1 *Thes* 4. 6. *Rom.* 13. 5, 6, 7. *Mat.* 22. 21. *Tit.* 3.

50. We are to give unto all men whatsoever is their due, as their place, age, estate require; and that we defraud no man of any thing, but do unto all men as we would they should do unto us. 1 *Pet.* 2. 15, 17. *and* 5. 5. *Eph.* 5. 21, 23. *and* 6. 1, 9. *Tit.* 3. 1, 2, 3.

51. There shall be a (*a*) Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, and every one shall give an account of himself to God, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. (*a*) *Act.* 24. 25. 2 *Cor.* 3. 10.

The

The Conclusion.

THus we desire to give unto Christ that which is his, and unto all lawful authority that which is their due, and to owe nothing to any man but love; to live quietly and peaceably, as it becometh Saints, endeavouring in all things to keep a good conscience, and to do unto every man (of what judgement soever) as we would they should do unto us; that as our practice is, so it may prove us to be a conscionable, quiet, and harmless people (no waies dangerous or troublesome to humane society) and to labour and work with our hands, that we may not be chargeable to any, but to give to him that needeth, both friends and enemies, accounting it more excellent to give than to receive. Also we confess that we know but in part, and we are ignorant of many things which we desire & seek to know, and if any shall do us that friendly part, to shew us from the word of God that we see not, we shall have cause to be thankfull to God and them. But if any man shall impose upon us any thing, that we see not commanded by our Lord Iesus Christ, we should in his strength rather embrace all reproaches & tortures of men, to be stript of all outward comforts, and if it were possible, to dy a thousand deaths, than to do any thing against the least tittle of the truth of God, or against the light of our own consciences. And if any shall call what we have said Heresy, then do we with the Apostle acknowledg, that after the way they call heresie, worship we the God of our Fathers, disclaiming all Heresies (rightly so called) because they are against Christ, and to be stedfast and immoveable, alwaies abounding in obedience to Christ, as knowing our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

PSAL 74. 21, 22.

Arise, O God, plead thine own cause; Remember how the foolish man blasphemeth thee daily.

O let not the oppressed return ashamed, but let the poor and needy praise thy name.

Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.

To

To all the Churches of God ſanctified in Chriſt Ieſus, called to be Saints, with all that in every place profeſs the name of Ieſus Chriſt our Lord, both theirs and ours.

Beloved Brethren,

HAving theſe many years, through the grace and free mercy of our God, been kept in the profeſſion of the name of Chriſt, contained in the holy Scriptures of the Prophets, and Apoſtles; and finding the exceeding benefit and comfort of walking with God in ſome meaſure ſuitable to what he hath made known unto us; and well knowing that we are called to live in the laſt ages of the world, wherein iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxeth cold; as likewiſe conſidering thoſe peculiar times ſpoken of in the 2 of *Tim.* 3. 1. &c. are come upon us, wherein men who ſometimes have made a large profeſſion of God and godlineſs, are turned aſide to commit all manner of uncleanneſs with greedineſs, having turned the grace of our Lord Jeſus into laſciviouſneſs, calling darkneſs light, and light darkneſs, by means of whom the way of truth is evil ſpoken of, and many poor ſouls through temptations ready to quit their profeſſions, and to be taken with their ſnares, we thought it our duty to declare our utter diſlike, abhorring, and deteſtation of all ſuch evil perſons, and waies, who ſhall under any pretence whatſoever plead for, or practiſe any way of ungodlineſs.

And having been through the goodneſs of our God, inabled to diſcern the ſecret and ſubtil deſigns and ſnares of Satan, which he hath laid to entrap poor ſouls in; by carrying them from Step to ſtep, untill they have been wholly captivated in his Snares, and fitted by him to do him ſervice.

We could do no leſs, than according to that meaſure of light we have received from the Lord, to diſcover his Wiles, and Stratagems, and to caution all that profeſs the fear of the Lord, to watch over their own hearts, and waies, and to take heed leſt they fall into the ſame condemnation.

For this we have found, that that way which God in his infinite wiſdome, taketh to bring ſouls unto himſelf by, viz. the preſenting unto men his great love, in giving Jeſus Chriſt to ſuffer death, and his great ſalvation to all that believe in his name, Satan, that old Serpent, through his inſtruments, under the ſpecious pretences of beating men off from all falſe reſts, endeavours with all his ſtrength to oppoſe and make void; perſwading the Sons and daughters of men, that what is declared concerning the death of Chriſt at Jeruſalem, and his bearing our iniquities in his own body upon the Croſs, is but a meer hiſtory and ſhadow; that the Scriptures are but a letter, and the Ordinances of God but fleſhly forms, thereby labouring to beget in the peoples minds a contempt, and ſlight eſteem of Chriſt, his Word, and Ordinances; and that he might cheat them to purpoſe, tells them of a God within, and a Chriſt within, and a Word within: and that God, and Chriſt, and they, are one, without any true diſtinct knowledge of the true meaning of that which is expreſſed; whereby poor ſouls with great and ſwelling words of vanity, triumph in a great myſtery of meer nothing, but emptineſs and confuſion, ſpeaking things whereof they know not; and many poor ſouls knowing ſuch expreſſions to be Scripture phraſes, do greedily embrace them, without a true, diſtinct, and clear underſtanding the ſenſe of what is ſpoken, having the perſons of thoſe who ſpeak ſuch language in great admiration, as the chief, tender, charitable, knowing, high and ſpiritual Chriſtians; whereas indeed although the words

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ſpoken by them, are many of them true in themſelves (without which Satan could not ſo effectually deceive) as that God and Chriſt, and the Spirit, dwell in us, and that God and Chriſt, and the Saints, are one; Yet are we to underſtand this union to be only in a way of relation through participation of the ſame Spirit, and this dwelling to be only in reſpect of grace, and powerful operation and influence, working in the hearts of believers, according to the tenor of the *New Covenant*, in making men holy and humble, purifying their hearts, cauſing them to walk in all good conſcience towards God and Man, all which by them is trampled underfoot, and another kind of union, and indwelling driven at in their diſcourſes, which although covertly expreſſed, until by craft and ſubtility they have prepared the hearts of ſimple and unſtable ſouls, to receive whatſoever they ſhall ſuggeſt unto them, yet then is openly diſcovered, being indeed the root of all bitterneſs and deſperate prophaneſs and blaſphemy, that can be imagined in the world: for from thence they conclude, that themſelves are God, and Chriſt, and what God is, they are, and what they are, God is, for ſay they, there is no ſpirit but one, and ſo deny any created Angel or Spirit; holding upon the ſame account the living ſoul in man to be uncreated, and ſo conſequently to be God himſelf, and not created by God. Now this being the ground-work of their deluſion, the building is anſwerable.

For firſt, Concluding the reaſonable ſoul to be God.

Secondly, they affirm that this ſoul being clothed with their humane bodies, or fleſh, is Chriſt, or God in fleſh; hereupon they imagine that Jeſus Chriſt ſpoken of in the Goſpel, as being born of the Virgin *Mary*, accuſed by the *Jews*, delivered by *Pilate* to be crucifyed, dying at *Ieruſalem* upon the *Croſs*, riſing the third day, and aſcending into heaven, is only to be underſtood parabolically, or figuratively, ſpeaking of one thing, and intending another; pointing at, and prefiguring a work only within us, conceiving the *Virgin Mary*, the *Jews*, *Pilate*, *Jeruſalem*, the *Croſs*, *Chriſt riſing* and *aſcending*, ſpoken of in the Scriptures, to be all *within* them, and no ſuch thing ſubſtantially or in truth *without*.

As they conclude all things ſpoken of *Chriſt*, to be but in a typicall, or figurative manner; intending and typifying out this God within, or God incarnate in their fleſh, ſtill meaning their reaſonable ſouls, conceiving this to be the ſubſtance of all thoſe ſhadows; ſo alſo upon this ground they are forced to conclude the whole new Teſtament, with all the Doctrines, Laws, Rules, and Adminiſtrations of the ſame, to be but a ſhadow or figure, holding forth a ſubſtance within. As for inſtance, *Moſes* and *Aaron*, being but figures of the ſubſtantiall Saviour, and Prieſt to come, ſo the adminiſtrations of *Moſes* as *Moſaicall*, were but fleſhly and carnall adminiſtrations, to be aboliſhed when the ſubſtance was come, they being only ſhadows of good things to come; in like manner do they underſtand Chriſt in his perſon, to be but a ſhadow of Chriſt within, and all his heavenly and ſpiritual Goſpel to be but a letter and carnall hiſtory put to an end and aboliſhed, when they once come to apprehend that the ſubſtance of all is within. They comming alſo to believe that the ſoul is God, do thence infer that they are perfect, & that they are in as happy eſtate as can be; for this they urge, 1 *Cor.* 15.24. to the 28. to ſhew when the kingdom is delivered up to the Father, all his people come to a more immediate enjoyment of God the Father, and then Chriſt ceaſeth his Mediatorſhip, and conſequently, all his New Teſtament ceaſeth: now they conclude that all this is accompliſhed when they come to diſcern there is but one ſpirit, and their ſoul that ſpirit which is God, and then they are in the poſſeſſion of all things.

And ſeeing that the Scripture declares that before our full poſſeſſion of God and Glory, there muſt be a temporal death, and reſurrection of the body, and eternal judgement, they upon the former grounds, judging themſelves already glorified, do underſtand

ſtand this death of the body in all ſuch Scriptures myſtically, and that the Reſurrection and eternal judgement, are paſſed already in the ſoul, as *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* did, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. compared with 1 *Tim.* 1. 19. Thence alſo they conclude, that faith and juſtification by Chriſt, together with all the Ordinances of Chriſt, are aboliſhed, as fleſhly forms, like unto Chriſt that appointed them, above and without all which, they triumphantly (in their own fancies) live when they once have attained this ſupereminent life (as they ſpeak) of being in the full fruition of God, comprehending that infinite being, (which they blaſphemouſly affirm themſelves to do) intruding themſelves into things they are altogether ignorant of: Hereupon is it that they, as *Peter* ſaith, ſcoff at any ſecond comming of Chriſt, 2 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4. and mock at the holy Scriptures, thoſe heavenly Oracles of God, denying them to be the word of God, or that Law by which they ought to conform their lives, conceiving and uttering that there is no law nor rule, but what is in man, his light being his only law, that is to ſay, whatever that Spirit that dwels within (which they call God within) dictates to them, that ought to be done by them, ſtrengthening themſelves with this opinion, that there is no ſin but what contradicts a mans own light (which is a mans onely law) and ſin is only ſin to him that thinks it ſo, and that there is no hell but that torment that men ſuſtain through croſſing their own light (which God knows is nothing but thick darkneſs) from theſe principles the deſperately wicked and deceitfull hearts of men fortified in their ſins, having now their conſcience ſeared with a hot Iron, account it their onely miſery and hel, that they are troubled at any thing, be it never ſo abominable; thus caſting off all trouble and remorſe of ſin, they follow the law of their own mind, (as they needs muſt, conceiving their own ſouls to be the only eternal God) and whatſoever their evil hearts are naturally inclined to, whether Drunkenneſs, Curſing, Swearing, or Whoredome (although for a time their principles do not put ſuch horrid impieties in execution) yet at length being violently hurried on through the aſſiſtance of the ſtrong impulſions, and reſtleſs ſuggeſtions and inſtigations of the devil, (the judgements of God being alſo heightned upon them) they now commit the ſame with greedineſs, and that with ſuch a high hand, as they account it their perfection, and the higheſt pitch of their glory, to give up themſelves to ſuch abominations, pleading for them, affirming that they have made a *League and Covenant with ſin, death and hell, and have communion with God in all theſe, ſeeing all theſe and what ever evils can be imagined, are reconciled to God, and ſo good*. accounting all their actions for good, being acted by their own ſpirits, which (as they think) are God, ſaying that God (but truly not God, but their own accurſed ſpirits) willed that they ſhould curſe and ſwear, and be drunk, and fill themſelves with all uncleaneſs, which they eſteem to be perfect righteouſneſs, calling that holineſs and righteouſneſs which conſiſts in a ſpotleſs conformity to the lawes of Chriſt revealed in the Scripture (which curbs the inſolency of the fleſh, and luſts of the heart) *a plaguy and naſty holineſs*, that muſt be deſtroyed; ſo that thoſe amongſt them, that can with the greateſt impudency, without the leaſt check or controul of conſcience, commit the moſt horrid abominations, (which we tremble to think of) they are the moſt perfect, and the moſt ſwallowed up in the will of God: to juſtify theſe their abominations, they ſay, the *Angels of God ſware with glory and Majeſty*, which Angells are God in them (for all created Angels they deny) who therefore may ſwear as they will, and that with glory and Majeſty; yea ſo great is their thraldome and captivity, that now the Prince of the power of the Air, that rules in the hearts of theſe children of diſobedience, hath ſo far the maſtery and dominion over them, as that they are ready, not only to fight againſt God himſelf in his ſpiritual Ordinances, but againſt civil ſocieties, violating the bond of marriage, and lawes of families, againſt the very principles and light of nature, which common juſtice (remaining among the Heathens)

would

would ſoon adjudge to merit ſevere puniſhment: and certainly thoſe that ſhall thus tranſgreſs all civil bonds, do not only ly liable to the juſt and fearfull judgement of God, but juſtly incur the puniſhment of this world.

Having thus laid open ſome of the principles, and evil practices of theſe men, even that root of bitterneſs, from which ſuch their ſinful branches grow; by which every one whoſe eyes are opened, may diſcern what a fearful thing it is to leave the Holy Word of God, and give heed to the motions of a deceitful heart, and to the dictates of a lying ſpirit: we ſhall now endeavour briefly to make manifeſt the ſandineſs, and dangerouſneſs of the foundation whereupon theſe things are built; which we ſhall eſſay to do by proving, That the ſoul of man is not God, but a creature, created and made by God; which will appear both by Scripture and reaſon, if you conſider,

1. That God is incomprehenſible, the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, but the ſoul of man is comprehended and contained in the body.

2. God is Almighty, but the ſoul of man is not: whatever God will, that he can do; but man deſires many things, and hath not power to accompliſh them.

3. God knoweth himſelf and all things, the ſecrets of hearts, things paſt, preſent, and to come; but alas! the ſoul of man knows not the being of it ſelf, nor of the leaſt creature, he knows not what is done in another houſe next to him.

4. The ſoul is made and created, 1 *Cor.* 15. *The firſt Adam was made a living ſoul*, Jer 38. 16. It is written, As the Lord liveth that made us this ſoul: now to be made and created, argues a beginning, but God is without beginning; therefore the ſoul cannot be God.

5. God is the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh, *Num.* 16. 22. there is a ſpirit in the body, of which God is the Father, *Heb.* 12. 9 which God forms within man, *Zach.* 12. 1. with which ſpirit the Spirit of God bears witneſs, *Rom.* 8. 16. which plainly proves our ſpirit or ſoul to be a creature: the truth of which further appears in that God can deſtroy the ſoul, or caſt it into hell fire, *Mat.* 10. 28. in that the ſoul may be converted, *Pſa.* 19. 7. in that it ſtands in need of deliverance and redemption, *Pſa.* 13. 19. 34. 22. 49. 8. But now God cannot be deſtroyed, neither needs he any redemption at all. By this it is clear that mans ſoul is not God, and if not his ſoul much leſs is his body, that is ſubject to ſuch variety of diſtempers, and ſo neither body nor ſoul. O therefore what a horrid thing is it for men to affirm they are God, that made and created all things, that governs the world, and the like, and to father all their abominations upon the Lord, thinking him to be altogether ſuch a one as themſelves are? from hence we may ſafely conclude,

1. That if the ſpirit be created by God, and is united to the body, then thoſe actions that are done by the body, are the actions of the man. O how ſome men fighting againſt the light, cry out that it is God in man only that acts, that ſhall be ſaved, and the like; whereas it is evident that it is the man that acts, either good things, viz. the man that believeth, prayeth, conformeth, and is bleſſed of God, or it is the man that ſins and walks in diſobedience, which man is the ſubject of deſtruction.

2. That if the ſpirit be created by God, it muſt be ſubject to the will and law of the Creator: things created are for the praiſe of the Creator, we are made by God to ſhew forth his praiſe, and by our obedience to declare our ſelves to be his children, we are not left at liberty to run from God; this was that that involved *Adam* at firſt in miſery, and ſtill keeps his off-ſpring in ſorrow and confuſion.

3. That ſin is the defection, variation from, or the tranſgreſſion of the law of our Creator, and not of our own wills: when we do the things God forbids, or leave undone the things commanded, we ſin againſt God the Lord, the Creator of ſoul and body.

From the not right underſtanding of the Creatures ſubjection, and relation unto God,

flow alſo thoſe vain allegorizings of thoſe texts of Scriptures that ſpeak of Chriſt himſelf. For if we ſearch the Scripture we ſhall ſee clearly, that Chriſt Jeſus was not a figure or ſhadow of a ſubſtance to be enjoyed now or hereafter (as theſe men dream) but the true ſubſtantial good it ſelf, the true Mediator God and Man, the ſubſtance of all figures and ſhadows under the Law, which was a School-maſter unto Chriſt, *Gal.* 3. 24. The Apoſtle tells us, The adminiſtrations under the Law, were a ſhadow of good things to come, the body or ſubſtance whereof was Chriſt, or was in Chriſt; now it is againſt common ſenſe and reaſon, that one ſhadow ſhould type out another, and that as carnal and fleſhly as it ſelf: but the contrary hereof is moſt certain, for *Moſes* and *Ioſhua* being typical Saviours, redeeming the ſpiritual Iſrael out of *Ægypt* into Earthly *Canaan*, muſt needs hold out a Subſtantial Saviour, that moſt effectually ſhall redeem the ſpiritual Iſrael, for ſaith the *Apoſtle*, He is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God by him, ſeeing he everliveth to make interceſſion for them, *Heb.* 7. 5. He is the *Alpha*, and *Omega*, the *Beginning* and the *Ending*, *the firſt and the laſt*, *Rev.* 1. 18. who ſaid to *Iohn* fear not, for I was dead and am alive for evermore, Amen: And I have the keyes of Hell and of death. This Jeſus is not only true man as touching fleſh, but alſo God over all bleſſed for ever, or the moſt high God, *Rom.* 9. 5. *Iohn* the Baptiſt teſtifying of Chriſt, *Iohn* 3. 31. ſaith, he that commeth from above, is above all, and this is true of Chriſt, as touching his God-head, who alſo is truly man, ſoul and body, conſiſting of a humane ſoul, and fleſhly body, and that after his reſurrection, as appears *Luke* 24. 39. In reference to the conjunction of both humane and divine nature, he ſaith, I lay down my life, and I take it up again, as man he died, as God he raiſed himſelf from the dead; now that any ſhould be ſo vile & wretched as to count the ever bleſſed Lord, who is the moſt high and bleſſed Savior, a fleſhly form and ſhadow, becauſe according to the infinite wiſdome and love of God he aſſumed mans nature, that he might thereby become a more fit and ſuitable Saviour unto them, we are wounded in our ſouls to think thereof, and tremble to think what hardneſſe of heart, ingratitude and blindneſs of mind, ſuch ſouls are given up to; and though they may talk of being above the diſpenſation of Chriſt, the Kingdome being in them reſigned up to the Father, they ſay they know not what; for before the office of Chriſts Mediator-ſhip ceaſes, and the Kingdome be reſigned to the Father, the Scripture expreſſely tells us, all enemies muſt be ſubdued under his feet, *Pſa.* 110. 1. *Pſal.* 8. 6. 1 *Cor.* 15. 24, 25. *Heb.* 2. 6, 7. which is not yet effected, for Chriſts enemies, viz. the Devil, Sinne, Babylon, Antichriſt, the oppoſite oppreſſing civil powers of the world, death, and the grave, and the rule and authority they bear rule with, are not yet wholly by Chriſt put down, therefore the Office of his Mediatorſhip ſtill ſtands in force; Hence we may ſafely conclude,

Firſt, That if Chriſt be a ſubſtantial Mediator, truly ſpirituall, his Goſpell the which he and his Apoſtles have declared, is not a bare outward Relation, Hiſtory, a carnall Letter, but a ſpiritual and ſubſtantial Truth and Myſtery, containing the whole Mind, Will, and law of God, for us and all Saints to believe and practiſe throughout all Ages.

Secondly, It muſt needs be as durable as the Mediator is, for the Law of Chriſts Prieſt-hood is as durable as the Prieſt-hood it ſelf, the law depending upon the Prieſt-hood; for the change of the Prieſt-hood and Law goes together, and ſo the Prieſt-hood of old being changed, the law then and not till then was changed alſo, *Heb.* 7. 18. So when Chriſts Prieſt-hood is changed, then the law of that Prieſt-hood, and not till then ſhall be changed alſo.

Thirdly, It muſt alſo be granted, that the Scriptures which do declare this great myſtery of Jeſus Chriſt and his Goſpel, be the holy Scriptures, and the infallible Word

of God, for it could never have entered into the heart of man to have known or manifested those hidden Mysteries, had not God himself by his own Word revealed them from heaven; now the Scriptures are Gods Word, declaring his mind, making known his Counsell, being able to make the people of God wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, being given by the inspiration of God, and are profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in righteousnesse, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15, 16. and therefore not to be slighted and undervalued, as a dead Letter, a bare History, a carnall empty Story. Therefore dearly beloved brethren, we beg and intreat you, and every one that loves his Soul, to fear and tremble at the thoughts of slighting & despising Christ and his Gospel, or any one of his laws, or holy commandements revealed in his Word; for know, that God will set his Son upon his holy hill of Sion, *Psal.* 2. 8. and will call all his enemies that will not have him reign over them, and slay them before him. He is to be received to rule over us as King, as well as to be an oblation for sin, as he is a Priest and Sacrifice, so also a Prophet and a King, to teach and govern his people, being the Author of Eternal Salvation to all that obey him. Therefore that man that departeth from the way of subjection to Christ in his holy Commandments and Ordinances, refuseth Christ to be his Lord, and King, and judges himself unworthy of eternal life. Wherefore we in tender compassion to your souls, and zeal for the glory of God, do beseech and exhort you, that you still keep the holy commandments, as they were delivered unto you, that you doshew the same diligence to the end (for he that endureth to the end shall be saved) that ye stand fast, and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, that no man take your crown from you, and that you take heed that you be not led aside with the workers of iniquity. O let none of us dally with the wayes of God, lest we be given up to the error of the wicked, even to those horrible delusions before mentioned; for God is a just and holy God. O that God would give his people this wildome in all Nations to keep his holy commandments, for holiness becomes his house for ever; O that Gods severity might prevail with all that profess his name, to search their own hearts, lest not receiving the truth in love thereof, they be given up to strong delusions to believe a ly; lest they making sin their work and pleasure, God make condemnation to be their wages; and disannulling their league with hell and death, he pull them down from the top of their vanity, whether they have above the heights of the Clouds exalted themseves, and laugh at their destruction, and mock when their fear comes,

Ob. But many may be ready to object, that those who have fallen into such desperate abominations, were sometimes members of our Congregations, and from thence are apt to contemn our profession, and question whether our way be of God or no, saying, you see what your judgement leads to.

Sol. In answer to this we say,

1. That it is a Great mistake to judge that those persons were all of our societies, for this we can cleerly evince, that many, if not most of them, were never members with us.

2. Suppose they had been all of us (which yet is not so) yet we say that none may thence reasonably condemn our profession, nor our selves scruple it, as not of God, which we doubt not, but they will confess, if they consider.

1. That from the undeniable truths of God, and from the Churches gathered immediately by the holy Apostles themselves (which by all are granted to be the purest) many professors have gone astray, and falln into great condemnation: *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* made Shipwrack of faith and a good conscience, 1 Tim. 2. 19 affirming (as many of these in our dayes do) that the resurrection was past already, destroying the faith of some,

2 *Tim.*

2 *Tim.* 2 18. several in *Corinth* denying any resurrection at all, 1 *Cor.* 15. 12. others falling into very great abominations; *Jude* tells us, v. 4. That there were certain men crept in unawares, before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousnes, and denying the onely Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. To add one instance more for all (*John* saith) Little children, it is the last time, and as you have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time; they went out from us, but they were not of us, *John* 2. 18, 19.

2. The Spirit of God foreseeing such things should be, that we might not be stumbled when they come to pass, hath expresly foretold them; As to the Elders of *Ephesus*, *Act.* 20. 28, 29, 30. saith *Paul* by the Spirit, Take heed to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood; for I know this, that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock: Also, of your selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them; so also by the Apostle *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2. &c. There shall be (saith he) false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, and many shall follow their pernicious or lascivious wayes, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evill spoken of: *Jude* excites the Saints to remember the words of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus, how they foretold there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts, separating themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit, verse 17, 18, 19. and from whom shall they separate? but from the true Churches of Jesus Christ, professing the faith of Christ, and being baptized in his name (the Scripture no where approving any other Churches, that we read of) *Paul* also tells *Timothy* the time would come (and surely those prophecies are now fulfilled) when they would not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts, heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, that should turn away their ears from the truth, giving heed unto fables.

3. God in his wisdome permits these things, that those which are approved, may be made manifest, and those that seem to be what they are not, may be discovered; for Hypocrites have and will be creeping into the Church (and that no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of light) but because they receive not the truth in the love thereof, God sends them strong delusions that they should believe a lye, that they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousnesse, 2 *Thess.* 2. 10, 11, 12. &c 1 *John* 2. 18, 19.

4. We cannot wonder that those who draw neer to God in the visible profession of his name, being destitute of the power of godlinesse, do thus fall away; for God will be sanctified in them that draw nigh to him, either in making them conformable to his Will, to the praise of his grace, or else in discovering their falshhood, hypocrisie and madnes, making them dreadful examples of his wonderful severity, to the glory of his Justice. *Nadab* and *Abihu*, for offering strange fire, which the Lord commanded not, were destroyed by fire from heaven, *Lev.* 10. 1, 2, 3. The Lord himself proclaims from Heaven, that his wayes are righteous, and the just shall walk in them, but transgressors shall fall therein, *Hos* 14 *ult.* The narrow path of the Saints righteous walk, suits not with the licentious principles and interests of carnal men, and though sinners may be in Sion for a time, yet fear surprizes them, and by reason of the purity and brightnes of the wayes of God, they cannot abide therein, but cast Christs yoke from their necks, because it will not be subservient to their own lusts. A remarkable example of Gods severity against those that somerimes professed the truth, whose hearts were not right before God, we may see in *Judas*, and in *Ananias* and *Sapphirah*, who for lying against the Holy Ghost were suddenly destroyed, to the great fear of all the Church of Christ. As in nature

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the corruption of the best things, is the greatest corruption, so the greater profession men make of the truth, when once they be corrupted, they fall into the grosser abominations. The truth is, this is no ground to suspect our profession, because some fall from it, for who is it that sins the unpardonable sin? but one that professed the truth of the Gospel, *John* 1. 5, 6. Who are those that are twice dead, plucked up by the roots? except those that by profession were formerly alive in the truth.

Fifthly, and lastly, we do acknowledge, though some eminent Professors of the same truth with us have falln foully (which hath been the occasion of such grief to us) yet it hath been hitherto, and we hope ever shall be, our care (as they have been by the righteous judgement discovered) according to our duty to put them from amongst us, endeavouring to preserve our selves from all iniquity, and not to have fellowship with the unprofitable works of darkness, but rather to reprove them; We conclude this saying of them that are gone from us, and falln into such notorious wickedness, as *Iohn* saith, They went from us, because they were not of us, for if they had been of us, no doubt they would have continued with us, but they went out from us, that they might be manifest not to be of us.

If any shall judge what we have here declared doth savour of uncharitableness, rigidness, censoriousness and bitterness of Spirit to them that dissent from us, we desire all such seriously to take notice, that true love and charity is not the soothing of any in their sins, the healing of wounds slightly, the crying peace, peace, when sudden destruction is at hand; it is not the daubing with untempered morter, but it is true love to the truth, and to all for the Truths sake, consisting in plainness and simplicity, engaging us to endeavour the restoring of them that are falln, to pull them as brands out of the fire, to contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, to note such persons that walk disorderly, to endeavour the preserving of them that are found in the faith.

While some men cry out against us for uncharitableness, in crying down sin and sinful practices, O how uncharitable in truth are they, that can suffer God to be dishonoured, his Sonne to be vilified, his Truth trampled under foot, his Ordinances sleighted, and their own and thousands of poor souls in danger of being utterly seduced, to their own destruction, and yet have not a heart to relent for such practices, nor a tongue to plead against them, whereby others might be forewarned of their swift approaching danger; our consciences bear witness, that the honour of God, the love of his Truth, zeal for his Name, and if possible, the saving of souls from death, hath been the prevailing argument with us, thus to express our selves; beseeching the God and father of our Lord Jesus, that by the same power which raised him from the dead, he would make this instrumentall to confirm those who yet abide in the truth, to restore all the simple in heart, who are ready to turn aside from the voice of the true Shepheard, and to follow strangers, and the cunning sleights and devices of the destroyer, that walks up and down as a roaring Lying seeking whom he may devour, who hath cast down many, wounded, and slain many strong men: And that it may also to all men more fully discover the desperate folly and madness of those who triumph in their proud imaginations against the truth and Scepter of the Lord Jesus, that all may clearly see their house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death, lest they poor souls, through feigned speeches, being inticed to yield, and forced through the flattering of their lips, should go after them straightway, as an Ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a Fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike thorow their liver, hastning as birds to the snare, not knowing that it is for their life; and we by uncharitable silence should become guilty of their blood. Now brethren we commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, praying that you

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may ſtand upon your watch, cloathed with the whole armour of God, and that you may be kept blameleſs, living by faith, until the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, not caſting away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward; For yet a little while, and he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry. The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all. Amen.

FINIS.

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By John Spilsbery.